

REMARKS

Initially, Applicant would like to express appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Final Official Action provided. Upon entry of the present amendment, the claims 1, 21 and 23 will have been amended. Claims 1-2, 4-5, 21, 23, 27-28 and 30-35 are pending in the present application for consideration by the Examiner. As discussed above, Applicant notes that independent claims 1 and 21 have been amended to recite that the cylindrical holder fixedly holds the base member, and that independent claim 23 has been amended to recite that the cylindrical holder securely holds the base member.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-2, 21, 23, 27-28 and 33-35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,416,837 to NEEFE in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,517,140 to RAWLINGS. With respect to independent claims 1, 21 and 23, the Examiner has determined that NEEFE discloses the invention as claimed except for the cylindrical holder configured to surround and hold the base member, but has determined that RAWLINGS discloses such a limitation, and the Examiner concludes that it would have been obvious to combine this feature with NEEFE.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection. As noted in the above Discussion Summary, Applicant submits that the applied RAWLINGS reference (as well as the other references of record) fails to teach or disclose at least the claimed cylindrical holder that surrounds and fixedly holds the base member, as claimed in independent claims 1 and

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21, or that surrounds and securely holds the base member as claimed in independent claim 23. This arrangement is described in Applicant's specification at, *inter alia*, page 5, line 25.

Rather, the tube RAWLINGS is "adapted for receiving a plurality of free falling molds" (col. 2, line 58) and the mold 8 "loosely mates" with the groove 6 of the tube 2 (col. 8, lines 35-38). Also, as correctly noted by the Examiner, NEEFE fails to disclose a cylindrical holder configured to surround and hold the base member. It is thus submitted that the present claimed invention is patentably distinct from RAWLINGS, NEEFE and the other references of record, alone or taken in any proper combination thereof.

With respect to rejected dependent claims 2, 4-5, 27-28 and 30-35, since these claims are dependent from one of claims 1, 21 or 23, which are allowable for at least the reasons discussed *supra*, these pending dependent claims are also allowable for at least these reasons. Further, all dependent claims recite additional features which further define the present invention over the references of record.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that each and every pending claim of the present application meets the requirements for patentability under 35 U.S.C. §103, and respectfully request the Examiner to indicate the allowance the present application.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the present amendment is in proper form and that none of the references either taken together or taken alone in any proper combination thereof, anticipate or render obvious Applicant's invention. In addition, the applied references of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant features of the present invention have been pointed out. Accordingly, consideration of the present amendment, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all of the claims therein are respectfully requested and are now believed to be appropriate.

Applicant notes that this amendment is being made to advance prosecution of the application to allowance, and with respect to the claimed features argued as deficient in the prior art, should not be considered as surrendering equivalents of the territory between the claims prior to the present amendment and the amended claims. Further, no acquiescence as to the propriety of the Examiner's rejection is made by the present amendment. All other amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

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Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding the present response, or this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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